

May 31-1909

THE CONDOR

A Magazine of Western
Ornithology



Volume XI

May-June, 1909

Number 3



WKF

COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

CONTENTS

The White-throated Swifts on Slover Mountain (with one photo)	Wilson C. Hanna	77
Some Notes from Fresno County, California	John G. Tyler	81
The Mourning Dove (<i>Zenaidura carolinensis</i>) in Captivity	E. W. Gifford	84
A Problem in Indeterminates (with three photos)	P. M. Silloway	86
The Use of Magpie's Nests by other Birds (with one photo)	Robt. B. Rockwell	90
Swarming of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet	J. W. Preston	93
The Passing of the Pedro Island Sea Bird Rookery (with two photos by Oluf J. Heinemann	Milton S. Ray	94
An Ornithological Trip to Los Coronados Islands, Mexico (with three photos)-	Howard W. Wright	96
FROM FIELD AND STUDY		
Nest of the Western Meadowlark (with one photo)	Joseph Mailliard	100
Condors in a Flock	Ralph Arnold	101
<i>Scolecophagus carolinus</i> in Colorado	George Richards	101
The Swamp Sparrow on the Lower Rio Grande	Austin Paul Smith	101
The American Redstart in Southern California	Pingree I. Osburn	102
Ancient Murrelet at San Clemente	C. B. Linton	102
The small American Crossbill in California	J. Grinnell	102
Winter Notes from Clipper Gap, Placer County	E. Adams	102
Behavior of a Young Rivoli Hummingbird	F. C. Willard	102
The Derby Flycatcher (<i>Pitangus derbianus</i>) a permanent Resident within our Borders	Austin Paul Smith	103
Flicker Feathers	Joseph Mailliard	103
EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS		
CORRESPONDENCE		
PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED		
MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS		

Entered as second-class matter February, 1908, at the post office at Los Angeles (Hollywood Station), California, under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Issued from The Office of The Condor, First National Bank Building, Hollywood, Cal.

Price List of Cooper Club Publications

Some of these are very Scarce

THE CONDOR

Vol. I—1899—Bulletin of the Cooper Ornithological Club. No complete Vols. on hand.

Vol. II—1900 Complete	\$3 00	Vol. VII—1905 Complete	\$1 50
Vol. III—1901 " "	3 00	Vol. VIII—1906 " "	1 50
Vol. IV—1902 " "	2 00	Vol. IX—1907 " "	1 50
Vol. V—1903 " "	1 50	Vol. X—1908 " "	1 50
Vol. VI—1904 " "	1 50	Vol. XI—1909 Subscription	1 50

Separates:—"List of Land Birds of Placerville, Cal." (Central Sierra Nevada Mountains)

By CHESTER BARLOW

35 pp., 11 half tones 50 cts.

PACIFIC COAST AVIFAUNA

No. I—Birds of the Kotzebue Sound Region, Alaska. 88 pp. and map, 75 cts.

By J. GRINNELL

No. II—Land Birds of Santa Cruz County, Cal.; By R. C. MCGREGOR 22 pp., 25 cts.

No. III—Check List of California Birds; By J. GRINNELL 100 pp. and 2 maps, 75 cts.

No. IV—Birds of the Huachuca Mts., Arizona; By HARRY S. SWARTH 75 pp., 50 cts.

No. V—A Bibliography of California Ornithology; By J. GRINNELL 166 pp., \$1 50

No. VI—Ten-Year Index to THE CONDOR, By H. B. KAEDING 1 00

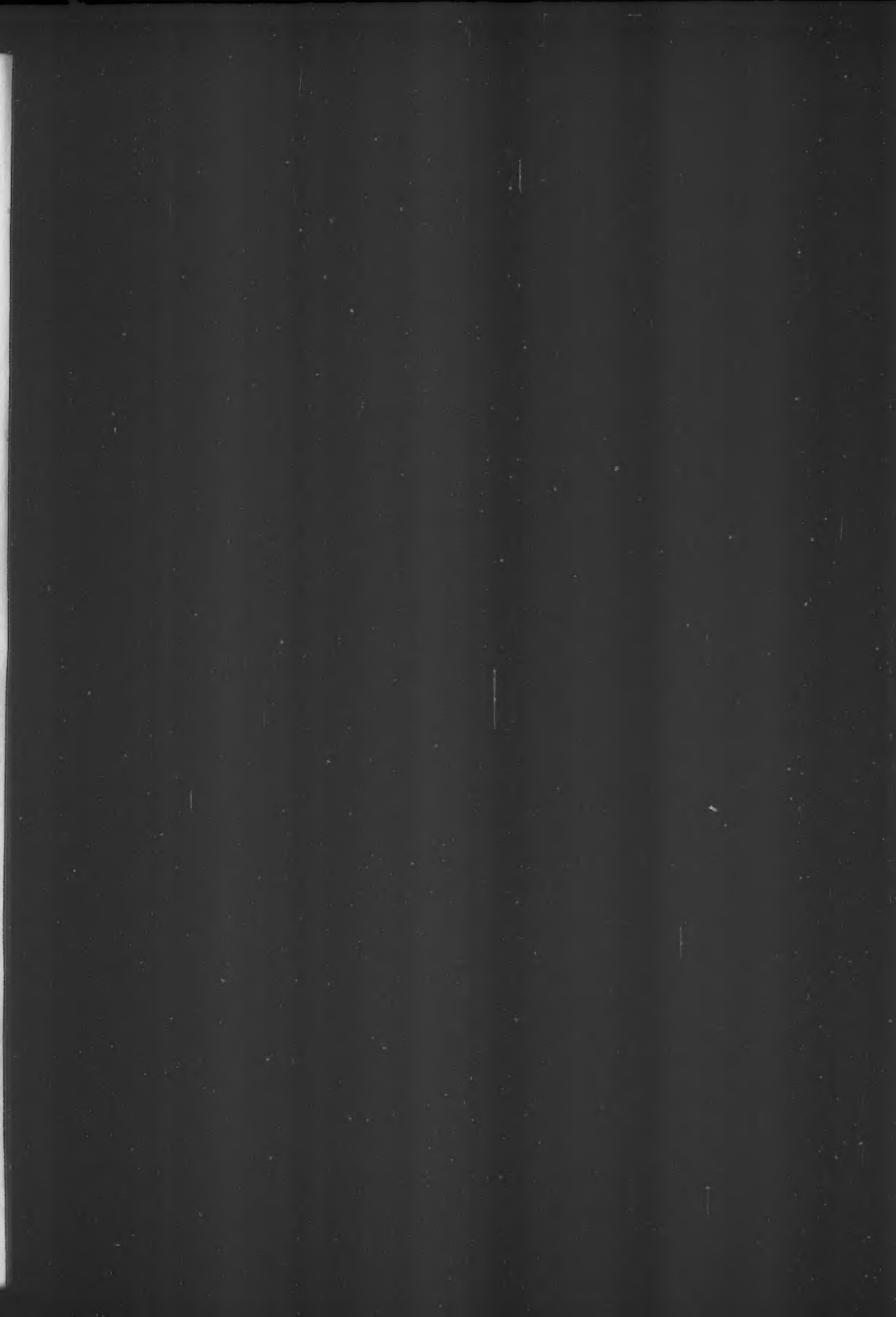
Address: J. EUGENE LAW, Business Manager

Hollywood, Cal.

Or, W. LEE CHAMBERS, Ass't Manager

Santa Monica, Cal.

When replying to advertisements please mention THE CONDOR



May 31-1909

THE CONDOR A MAGAZINE OF WESTERN ORNITHOLOGY.



Volume XI

May-June 1909

Number 3

THE WHITE-THROATED SWIFTS ON SLOVER MOUNTAIN

By WILSON C. HANNA

WITH ONE PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

THE last of December, 1907, found me with a strong desire to find and secure the nest and eggs of the White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes melanoleucus*).

This may seem to be an early date to begin to make arrangements, but to tell the exact truth this was not the first time that I had had such a fanciful desire. It was during one of the nice warm days in the above mentioned month that I became convinced that some of these most interesting birds had made their home on Slover Mountain.

Slover Mountain, a land mark of the San Bernardino Valley, is an isolated hill of solid limestone situated about a mile southwest of the busy little city of Colton. It rises to about 500 feet above the floor of the valley, this being about 1500 feet above sea level. Old Slover has always been famous as a look-out point for residents of the valley and no tourist has seen the valley properly without the view from Slover. During the past twenty years this old hill has been the seat of ever growing commercial activity, and with large cement works on two sides of the hill, marble works, lime kilns, quarries, etc., one would scarcely expect to find it the home of the White-throated Swift. The continual blasting in the many quarries and the many holes on the hill have made it so dangerous to visitors that few would care to risk the ascent even if they could obtain permission from the California Portland Cement Company to do so. One of the treacherous places has proved to be a boon to the swifts, and it is with the swifts in this old abandoned quarry on the highest part of the mountain that this article is to deal.

The old quarry is noteworthy not only as being the home of the White-throated Swifts, but as the quarry from which the rock was obtained in the early nineties to manufacture the first Portland cement west of the Mississippi River, and the removal of rock from this quarry consumed the very highest point of the hill. When the cement company abandoned this quarry about 1896 for more accessible workings a couple of hundred yards away, they left a narrow gulch about twenty to thirty feet wide, one hundred and twenty-five feet long, and with two almost perpendicular faces of limestone, as much as seventy-five feet high in some places

on the south face. There are of course, as in other quarries, a few crevices and cracks in the face due to water and to the blasting, and it was in these cracks in the solid rock that the swifts selected sites for their homes.

During the past eighteen years I have been a frequent visitor to all parts of the mountain, but it was in the summer of 1904 that I first noticed the swifts. In 1905, 1906, and 1907, I occasionally noticed them flying above the mountain, sometimes hundreds of them. In December, 1907, while inspecting the old quarry on the top of the hill I decided that the south face would prove to be interesting to an ornithologist and from that time my hours of leisure on Sundays were spent in the quarry. Some days I would find the birds circling about the top of the mountain, making an occasional swoop with bullet-like speed thru the gulch, where their peculiar harsh notes were re-echoed and re-inforced by the rock walls, thus making one expect to see birds much larger than the swifts. Sometimes these rapid swoops would end in the cracks, about ten feet from the floor, in the south face. I say *in* the cracks instead of *at* the cracks, for their aim almost always was so true that the two-inch opening did not seem to cause them to slow up. Some of my visits were not so pleasing to me, for upon several occasions I could find no signs of the birds, while upon other trips I could hear the birds "in the rocks" but could not make them come out. When April, 1908, came around I was convinced that I was observing the correct place; but I did not see any possibility of securing eggs or of even seeing them, for the seams they favored were either so crooked or extended so far that nothing could be seen no matter where the rope was lowered.

During April, I was called to the East, so told the quarryman, Mr. J. J. Matthews, about the birds and asked him to keep his eyes on them when on that part of the hill, because he might be rewarded by finding a nest. Mr. Matthews became very much interested in the quest and as he was an expert in rope climbing a more desirable assistant could not be hoped for.

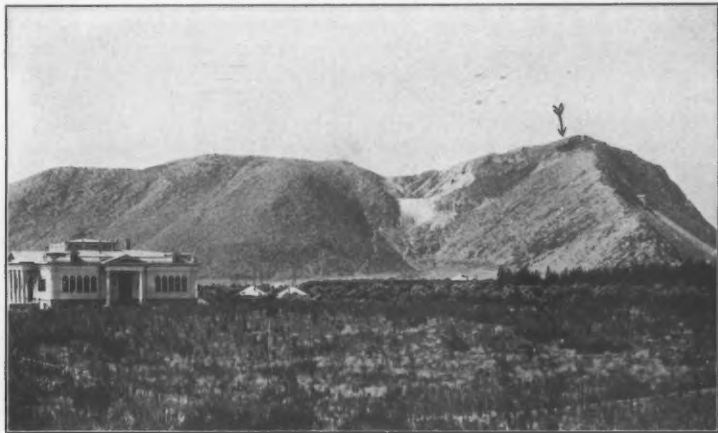
When I returned early in May, Mr. Matthews informed me that he had found a nest of "those rare birds" and better yet that the nest could be seen from the crack in the rock, and best of all that he thought that we would be able to secure the nest by some hard work. This was encouraging news, and armed with permits from the California Portland Cement Co., and the State Board of Fish Commissioners, we made plans to observe the nest regularly and secure some eggs if possible. A walk to the top of old Slover and a rope climb proved to be good exercise, after working hours. The fact that there was so much work connected with the observations made me admire the White-throated Swifts even more than I had before.

Nest no. 1 was reached by throwing a rope from the top of the quarry to the ground and then climbing up the rope from the bottom and working along the face by means of friendly crevices. If the rope had been lowered directly above the nest we would have been several feet from the face and could not have worked to advantage. The nest was about eighteen feet from the floor of the quarry and forty from the top, and was situated in a crevice from one to three inches in width, about four feet long and extending back about two feet. The nest was only about one foot from the face and was firmly glued between the two walls, probably by means of saliva, but some of the weight may have been supported by a few projections from the rocks.

Judging from the rate at which nest no. 1 progressed after we first saw it, we think it was started about April 15. It seemed to be almost done on May 1, but it continued to be improved upon day by day and on May 16 we observed the first egg. More improvements were made during the next few days and on May 19 there were two eggs, and on May 22 another. During most of these observations

no swifts were in sight, but on one occasion a bird was in the crevice and remained there during our examination of the nest. The nest was visited May 23, but the bird was on the nest and would not flush. On May 24 there was another egg and as there were no more on May 28, we decided it was time to secure the nest and eggs if possible.

The first thing to be done was to cut some notches in the rock for a foot-hold, so that we would be able to steady the rope while removing the nest, for of course it would not do to take any risks. The next thing to do was to cut away the rock from below until we could get a hand under the nest. This was accomplished little by little on all of our trips so that on May 28 a half-hour of work was sufficient to get the rock out of the way. The bird was poked off the nest with a stick after several attempts to "shoo" it off, and the nest cut away from the rock with a long stick in the form of a chisel. The nest and eggs were removed from the crevice, placed in a box and passed to Mr. Matthews on the ground by means of a string. As I stood there and observed the nest and four eggs I realized how



SLOVER MOUNTAIN AS IT APPEARS FROM COLTON, CALIFORNIA; ARROW POINTS
TO PLACE WHERE WHITE-THROATED SWIFTS WERE NESTING

lucky I was to secure the eggs of the White-throated Swift and how many ornithologists would envy me.

The nest was composed of straw, feathers, waste, and cotton, without any special lining. There were no sticks or twigs in the composition and it seemed to get most of its strength from the large feathers. It was not artistic or strong but with two solid walls of rock to support the sides it probably would last for more than one season if the insects, with which it was overrun, did not injure it. The dimensions of the nest were one inch deep inside and two inches deep outside; $2\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{4}$ inches inside diameter, and $3\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches outside diameter. The four eggs are pure white in color, narrowly elliptical in form, one end being slightly smaller. The eggs taken by me are very uniform in size and measure in inches: .83 \times .55; .81 \times .56; .83 \times .55; .81 \times .56. Hence the eggs are a little smaller than those described by Mr. Walter E. Bryant in the

September *Nidologist* for 1894, which measured .87X.53; .88X.53; .88X.52; .86X.50.

Nest no. 1 and the set of eggs are now in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California.

Nest no. 2 was discovered June 15, when by moving a rock hanging to the face of the quarry, a crevice was exposed where several feet back in the solid rock out of our reach a nest with three young birds could be seen. I think the birds were a week or ten days old at this time, and they seemed to be of different sizes and without feathers. The birds were feathered on June 25 and on June 27 the nest was empty. The nest was located about fifteen feet from the floor of the quarry and fifty or sixty feet from the top.

Nest no. 3 was also discovered on June 15. Four feet of decomposed rock were moved and a crevice in the solid rock exposed. Several feet back in the crevice we could see part of a nest on a shelf and hear the young. We could see parts of the feathered birds on June 25; but on June 27 the nest seemed to be empty.

Probably there were at least twenty-five pairs of birds nesting in one large crevice in the solid rock, but it extended so far that it would have been impossible to secure the nests or even get a glimpse of them.

I believe that the birds are residents on Slover Mountain during the entire year but they do not seem to be plentiful during August and September. Some days the birds are numerous and on other days not a sign of them can be seen or heard. The birds seem to know that they are safe while "in the rocks", for when I have surprised them in the quarry, I have seen the birds which were at the openings to narrow crevices crawl on out where they could turn around and then crawl back into the crevices out of sight.

When not in the crevices they spend most of their time soaring above the mountain, probably feeding on insects. They can soar with much ease and can remain almost stationary in the air even in a strong breeze. No doubt the White-throated Swifts are the swiftest birds on the wing when they choose to "speed up", and with rapidly vibrating wings and bullet-like speed they seem to enjoy passing within a yard of a visitor to their haunts.

The swifts do not seem to have any musical ability, but their notes or calls are pleasing, especially to one who is studying them. One series of peculiar shrieks is given while the bird is in rapid flight and is suggestive of joyous freedom. Another series of notes is given when the birds are in the crevices, which sound very much like the twitterings of small chickens as they cuddle under their mother's wings, only the swifts' notes are much louder. These twitterings are quite a contrast to the wild shrieks, and they can not help but suggest comfort and satisfaction.

The swifts are not alone on Slover, for many other birds find enjoyment here. Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*) and a few Barn Swallows (*Hirundo erythrogaster*) are frequently noticed flying about with the swifts in May and June altho they do not nest on the mountain. Rock Wrens (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) are common on the mountain during the entire year, and on useless trips to the old quarry there was some satisfaction gained when I could see this little wren bobbing on a rock or hear its little song and sometimes find a nest in some convenient pocket in the rocks. Barn Owls (*Aluco pratincola*) monopolized the large crevices in different parts of the mountain and, due to their ignorance in choosing some places, it was not uncommon to smell burning flesh and feathers after blasts in the quarries. Intermediate Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli*) are common in the winter time. California Towhees (*Pipilo crissalis senicula*) are

always numerous, and conspicuous among them were several partial albinos. Black Phoebes (*Sayornis nigricans*) and Ash-throated Flycatchers (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) make their homes in an old lime kiln. California Bush-tits (*Psaltriparus minimus californicus*) and Black-tailed Gnatcatchers (*Polioptila californica*) are sometimes seen in the brush; and a frightened Road-runner (*Geococcyx californianus*) occasionally appears. The high rocks serve as good lookout points for stray hawks that happen to pass by that way. In the early days the Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*) made their homes on this old peak but now they only soar around the hill as if to inspect the work of man. Of course hummingbirds and other birds found in the valley are found at the base of the mountain.

Spring is now here again and as I write these notes I feel the longing to visit the birds in their haunts and I am hoping that I may secure some more information concerning the White-throated Swifts on Slover Mountain.

Colton, California; March 1, 1909.

SOME NOTES FROM FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

By JOHN G. TYLER

THE Pigmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*) is not an uncommon bird in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of this county, but only once during the past eight years has the writer noted its presence here in the San Joaquin Valley.

About two miles south of Clovis is an irrigation canal locally known as the Gould Ditch. Numerous ragged old willows and occasionally a cottonwood are found along the banks, sometimes close together and in other places farther apart but forming practically the only large trees to be found in the immediate vicinity in any numbers. Among this double fringe of trees, with water and good feeding grounds near at hand, many of our birds find suitable nesting places, and here during migration one stands the best chance of seeing some straggler from other regions.

On the first day of November, 1903, while making my way along this canal a Pigmy Nuthatch was seen working over a large cottonwood tree. When first observed the bird was about fifteen feet from the ground and upon seeing me it dodged behind the tree for a moment giving me a chance to approach unobserved, an opportunity that I quickly took advantage of, finally pausing not over eight feet from the base of the tree and remaining motionless. Soon the bird appeared again working around the tree in a sort of spiral fashion, head downward. Nearly half an hour was spent in watching this little visitor from the Sierras in its search for food. So long as I remained quiet it seemingly did not notice my presence, but a sudden movement would cause it to fly to the upper branches only to begin again its up-hill downward climb evidently not having exhausted the food possibilities of that tree; and when I finally went away it was still at work.

The town of Clovis can boast of an elevation of about 340 feet and the nearest foot-hills with their scattering oaks are at least ten miles away, while the heavier timber such as this species generally frequents is not nearer than twice that distance; so the little slate-colored nuthatch seemed to have wandered far from its usual haunts.

Another species for which I have but one record is the Spotted Owl (*Syrnium occidentale*). The ninth day of March, 1908, found me in search of a much needed nest of the Pacific Horned Owl. The place selected was one of the canyons leading down from the hills east of Clovis. A small creek followed the windings of this canyon, its course marked by the usual tall sycamores and cottonwoods with a few willows scattered along at intervals. I knew there were a number of old nests to be found in this canyon and had hopes of finding a pair of the big owls occupying one of them but had failed to rouse an owl of any kind after some hours spent in throwing rocks and sticks until finally, upon entering the upper end of a small but rather dense grove of cottonwoods, a large owl flew from a tree nearby and disappeared. So certain it seemed that my efforts were to be rewarded that a search was begun at once for some old nest which I was sure, when found, would reveal the mate of the bird that had been disturbed. In a very short time a nest was found and almost at the same time my owl was seen sitting motionless on a branch almost directly overhead, and hardly more than twenty feet away, so that only a glance was needed to assure me that the bird was not a horned owl. The round head and absence of ear tufts would alone have made its identity certain, but when I had passed directly under the bird and noted the white-spotted head and neck there seemed no room for doubt, as, with the small glass I carried and with which I had hoped to detect the presence of a downy feather on some old nest, I brought the bird down apparently almost to arms' length and watched it for some moments as it sat quietly on the branch giving me a fine view of its almost chocolate colored upper parts against which the large round white spots were rather conspicuous, while no less distinct were the heavy black bars and blotches on its whitish underparts.

After watching the bird for some time the climb was begun to the nest near which it sat, but which proved to be unoccupied, as was also the only other one in the grove; so after failing to find the bird's mate I left the vicinity and did not return again until April 4 when, late in the evening, a friend and myself made camp about half a mile from the grove. The following morning we made a rather hasty search for the owl but failed to find any sign of it and the two nests were still unoccupied. During the night, however, I several times heard, far down the canyon, the hooting of what was probably a Spotted Owl as the notes were different from those of any horned owl that I ever heard. At times they somewhat resembled the latter and again sounded like the far-away deep baying of a hound. Heard in the stillness of the night the notes were rather weird altho somewhat mellowed by distance. I do not know that the bird was breeding anywhere in that region, but its occurrence there in March and probable presence near the same place almost a month later would seem to indicate that it might have been.

As before stated, there were numerous old nests scattered along the creek for miles, and only a few hundred yards from the grove were the nests of a small colony of Magpies; so there were probably plenty of suitable nesting sites to be found, but at least a two days' search would have been required to cover the ground thoroughly and I was compelled to give up the quest. At some future time, however, I hope to be able to give an authentic record of the breeding in this county of the Spotted Owl.

The following record is given to show the persistency with which some birds will continue their attempts at nidification even in the face of most discouraging circumstances. It also proves that the theory of second and third sets consisting of a smaller or the same number of eggs will not always hold good.

During the last few days in March, 1902, a pair of California Shrikes (*Lanius*

ludovicianus gambeli) completed a nest in a large, ragged, old willow, and from this nest I took a set of five eggs on April 8; incubation begun, as was proven by the fact that the set had been left for two or three days and had not increased in number.

By April 23 these birds had six more slightly incubated eggs in a nest not over sixty feet from the first one. It might seem that after collecting this set the birds should not have been molested again; but nevertheless a close watch was kept on them, and the 12th of May is the date on which their third nest was found to contain the largest set of shrike eggs the writer has ever seen, and this set which numbered eight was added to my collection. The experiment was becoming interesting, and as the sets were growing larger I seemed in a fair way to get a record breaker if the birds did not become discouraged and give up nest building for the season. This, however, they seemingly had no intention of doing and moved back to the same tree in which their first nest was built. This fourth nest was apparently just as carefully made as any of the earlier ones and yielded seven eggs to my cabinet on May 31. Seeing that the charm was broken, and feeling somewhat ashamed of my record, I resolved not to molest them again when they, with a perseverance that deserved its reward, began the work of constructing a fifth nest. It has always been a source of regret that circumstances did not permit a visit to this last nest until a day or two after the young had left it, so the number of young they finally succeeded in raising was not ascertained.

Now should any one accuse me of egg-hoggishness I am willing to plead guilty to the charge, but can add that the experiment has never been repeated, even upon a bird that is considered so great a rascal that it is one of the few species to which our State affords no protection.

The last day in February, 1902, it was my good fortune to see a part albino male Brewer Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). The bird was feeding with a large flock on some plowed ground and I had a good view of it at no great distance. The greater part of each wing was white and the bird was quite as conspicuous among his dark fellows as is the occasional Yellow-head that is sometimes seen in these winter flocks of blackbirds.

The only breeding colony of this species that I have been able to discover was at Shaver Lake, in the Sierras, at an elevation of about 5300 feet. During the latter part of May, 1908, about twenty nests were found, and there were no doubt more. They were all built in the old dead pine stubs standing in the lake. Some were placed in deserted Flicker excavations, others behind loose bark or on the ragged, broken-off tops of the stubs, while a few were built against the body of the stub and supported by one or two horizontal branches. The only nest that was examined was found on May 27, and was built in an old excavation about three feet above the surface of the water. The bird flew from the hole, and the nest, which was scarcely more than a circle of dry grass stems lined with rootlets, contained four heavily incubated eggs. The cavity was so shallow that the head of the bird that occupied it was about on a level with the lower part of the entrance.

The region about Shaver proved to be a most interesting one to me on account of the presence of several birds that one would hardly expect to find. One afternoon, while endeavoring to explore a willow-grown swampy area at the head of the lake, I came upon a small colony of Bi-colored Blackbirds (*Agelaius gubernator californicus*) all in very bright plumage. One male especially was unusually handsome and seemed anxious to display his colors to the best advantage, frequently making short flights into the air only to return to the place from which he started. While balancing on a partly-submerged log listening to the blackbirds

a chance glance upward revealed a Turkey Vulture drifting slowly across the sky. It almost seemed that once again I was down in the valley prowling about in the willows and brush along the Gould Ditch; yet I knew of half a dozen nests of Sierra Juncos within a few hundred feet of the lake and only a few moments before had been examining several nests of Western Robins in some small evergreens near the shore.

While standing there in the warm sunshine listening to the characteristic "h'-wak-a-ree" of the blackbirds I was suddenly reminded that the San Joaquin Valley, with its vineyards and canals, was many miles away, for from a clump of small pines nearby burst the harsh scolding notes of a Blue-fronted Jay. A moment or two later the soft but rather melancholy call of a Plumed Quail floated down to me from a pine-clad hillside.

Fresno, California.

THE MOURNING DOVE (*ZENAUDURA CAROLINENSIS*) IN CAPTIVITY

By E. W. GIFFORD

ON February 15, 1908, I purchased two of these beautiful doves, said to be cock and hen respectively. The smaller of the two, which I took to be the hen, was without a tail when I received her, but soon began growing one. The tail grew very fast, a difference in length being distinguishable daily. The birds were confined to a small summer-house, about five feet in diameter, until about the middle of April. About March 11 they began making their mournful cooing notes.

On April 12 I placed these birds in an aviary with a ground area of four hundred square feet. They seemed quite delighted with the change, and immediately went to feeding with several Barbary Turtle Doves in the short grass. About a week later I saw the smaller of the two, which I had thought was a female, in the act of cooing. Then I awakened to the fact that I had two cock birds. Had I been more familiar with the species I should not have been deceived by the difference in size.

In May and June they cooed incessantly during the day, and often in the middle of the night, especially if it was moonlight. It was also about this time that the two males were seen fighting in the evenings. Both were in beautiful fresh plumage.

On June 16 I purchased two more of these birds, both proving to be females. Inside of three or four days, one of them became very much attached to one of the cock birds, and it was amusing to see the unladylike manner in which she followed him about and shook her wings. Occasionally he would give chase, only stopping to coo when very close, and that very seldom. The two males would at this date pursue each other with great viciousness.

By June 24 the two females had mated with the two males. At this time one pair had a nest on top of a box placed in a peach tree; it consisted merely of a few sticks and straws. An egg was laid in it on June 23.

The other pair had a nest on a shingle nailed on the beam of a board fence on the west side of the aviary. The males did all the carrying of nesting material in both cases, the females usually sitting on or near the nest. When selecting the nesting site, the male would go to a likely place and squat down, raising the tail and lowering

the head. He would then give a very short coo, gently shaking the wings meanwhile. It seemed to amount to just one note of the many given in the usual call. The females seemed very gentle and loving to their mates. The two males, however, were very savage, carrying on a running fight with each other most of the time, altho sometimes standing their ground. In their blind jealousy they would at times attack the innocent Barbary Turtle Doves.

The pair which nested on top of the box in the peach tree were unfortunate, for on June 28 it was found that one egg had rolled off, and that the other was deserted. At that date it was found that they had started a nest in the lower part of the box which was covered over and had but one side open; no eggs had as yet been laid. Again the male carried all of the sticks and straws for the nest. In the morning the pair nesting on the shingle were found to have one egg; later in the day they had two.

On July 12, the pair nesting on the shingle hatcht a young one. By July 14 the second young bird had hatcht. On that date, however, the cock bird died. For a day or two before, I noticed that its excrement was green in color, while the bird stayed on the ground and appeared very inactive.

At that date, July 14, I did not know whether the eggs of my other pair had hatcht or not, as the parents sat very close, the female doing most of the incubating and the male relieving her for three or four hours in the middle of the day.

On the evening of July 15, I found one of the young of the pair nesting on the shingle dead. It was lying on the roof of a nearby shed, where it had evidently been carried by the mother, probably becoming attacht to her feathers.

On July 16 at least one egg belonging to the pair nesting in the box had hatcht, as I found the shell on the ground. On the 22nd I found a young bird dead in this nest; the other bird was in good condition and growing rapidly.

On the evening of July 25, when I approacht the nest on the shingle, the young bird flew away in alarm, striking the wire some twenty feet away. This bird spent either thirteen or eleven days in the nest. The following morning it left the nest without being disturbed and flew to the roof of the shed. On July 28 the young bird of the pair nesting in the box left the nest, having spent only twelve days in the nest.

On July 31 the hen having the nest on the shingle laid an egg, which I found broken the next day. She had been trying to steal the remaining cock bird from his mate. He seemed more attacht to her than to his mate.

On August 1 the female nesting in the tree laid an egg; this was just four days after her young one had flown. On August 2 the hen nesting on the shingle laid her second egg, which she deserted, however.

On August 14 the pair nesting in the box hatcht an egg. The other proved infertile. The young one developed in the usual time, twelve days. This seemed to close the breeding season; the male cooed little if any after this date, and all of his love and fondness for the two females disappeared.

For a few days after the young left the nests the females were very zealous in protecting them, attacking each other and any harmless turtle dove which came too close.

It was interesting to see how angry the hen nesting in the box became when she found that the widow hen was trying to steal her mate. She gave the widow one or two beatings; this appeared to cure her mate of his infatuation, for he paid no more attention to the widow. They were almost human in their jealousies!

This species seems to be one which could be easily domesticated in this country, if a little trouble were taken with it.

Alameda, California.

A PROBLEM IN INDETERMINATES

By P. M. SILLOWAY

WITH THREE PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

GIVEN: a man with a hobby; a box filled with cotton; a camera; and a bright day in the collecting season. Question: what will be the probable results? To the plain, matter-of-fact citizen, whose soul is bound by the chains of conventionality and commercialism, the problem seems impossible and well-nigh incomprehensible. In the first place he can not understand how a man,



TYPICAL NESTING SITE OF THE LONG-BILLED CURLEW

a full-grown, sensible man, can have a hobby. If at length, however, it finally dawns upon him that a man can have a hobby and still be a man, the aforesaid citizen can not possibly comprehend the box of cotton. The idea that a grown-up man should be seen wandering over the prairie or along streamside or thru the woods with a box of cotton (and intentions not so evident), is to the aforesaid citizen prima facie conviction of deep-seated dementia. And the camera, why what on earth is there to be seen worth photographing? The bare idea of a man going around photographing birds' nests—what can you get out of it? And the bright day in the collecting season—what has that to do with the question? And so the problem assumes hopeless proportions.

And yet to you, gentle reader—you who have a hobby yourself, you whose soul

is free to go forth from its sordid surroundings and occasionally invigorate itself by drinking at nature's fountain, you who once at least were not ashamed to be seen afield with a cigar box tucked under your arm or at least a baking powder can stowed away in your coat pocket, you who appreciate somewhat of the pleasures of kodaking and picture-making, you who see everywhere around you many things worth photographing, you who love the birds and flowers and the sunshine and the breezes—to you the problem is not only comprehensible and possible, but easy. Let us consider one solution of it.

It happened last spring that a stranger came to our town—a man with a hobby. Upon his inquiry for anybody in town to sympathize with him, he was

directed to me. Perhaps you know what it means to be a markt man in your community—your hobby is your brand, so to speak. Well, I was branded, and so the stranger soon rounded me up; and in our first talk-fest we arranged to get afield, for the stranger actually wanted to get some pictures of nests of western birds. Strange, isn't it, how peculiarly his dementia ran, poor man?—wanted to get pictures of birds' nests. At any rate it turned out that I could accommodate him; peculiar, wasn't it, that a poor demented fellow who wanted to photograph birds' nests should straightaway find some one who could tell him where the nests were?

To be candid I must say that I had been out over the prairie the day before, and had chanced on a nest of Lark Bunting just ripe for photographing, so I was sure of that for him anyway. Moreover I had aroused a male Curlew into swooping angrily at me, and I knew what that meant. You understand, then, that when



NEST AND EGGS OF LONG-BILLED CURLEW

I told my new-found friend I could show him something to photograph, I felt sure of delivering the goods. So we went afield.

My friend didn't know much about birds, for his hobby was *pictures*. A nest of the Lark Bunting was to him as great a prize as a nest of the Curlew. Not so with me, however, and on our way across the bench I explained to him what great opportunity had befallen him; for it is an opportunity to photograph a nest of the Curlew, if one has just dropt into Montana and never even saw a Curlew. In fact, it is not often that a tenderfoot is granted an opportunity to gaze upon one of the greatest treasures of our great Treasure State, a nest of the Curlew; such an experience is reserved only for the initiated—it is one of the rites of the thirty-third degree of bird nesting, so to speak. All this I explained in fullest detail to my fellow-hobbyist, and be it said to his credit that he appeared to grasp the value of the opportunity.

My first objective point was a solitary fence-post, marking the stalking ground

of the male Curlew I had angered on my preceding trip across the prairie. The post, remnant of a removed fence, was in the midst of a long knoll-side, stretching a mile in either direction, and served as a vantage point for the Curlew in guarding his home. I explained to my *particeps criminis* that while the female Curlew is sitting on her eggs, the male is loafing somewhere within sight of the nest, ready to defend the premises in case of threatened danger to his home. We found the male there, feeding carelessly. The first thing, in order to impress upon my friend's mind (that is, such portion of it as was not occupied with picture) the great difficulty in finding a nest of the Curlew if one doesn't know how to do it, I directed him to make a mental note of the place where we first attracted the Curlew, so as to make an estimate of the distance from it to the nest (if we should find it). From the place where the Curlew settled down near us and angrily cackled the first time, my friend afterward guessed the distance to the nest to be over a half mile. And you who live in the west know how deceptive distances are out here.

The general theory of finding a Curlew's nest lies in this fact: the male, while the female is sitting, will follow you if you go toward the nest, or leave you alone if you veer away from the general direction toward it; and the nearer you get to the nest, the more angry and threatening becomes the male in showing his dislike of your presence near it. Now, finding a nest of the Curlew is a trade secret; and while willing to show my friend the nest, it wasn't necessary that I show him *how* to find the nest, for his hobby was *pictures*, you will remember; so why strew one's pearls before the unappreciative? If he ever becomes an egg-crank and wishes me to show him how to find the nests, I shall be glad to offer him the courtesies of the profession. In this instance, however, having ideas of his own, he proposed that we separate, upon my explaining to him that all depended upon the actions of the bird and that we must be guided solely by those; if the Curlew chose to act up, all right; and if not, there was not the remotest likelihood of our finding any nest.

In my own course, separated from him, I followed my usual tactics, gradually getting into closer quarters with the gallant old bird and calling my friend to me often enough to keep him in the fighting and to allow him to draw his own conclusions regarding the *modus operandi* of locating the nest. The knoll, which was only of very slight grade, was crossed by a road about a quarter of a mile from the starting post. We crossed the road and continued the chase in the adjoining pasture. At length, an hour and fifteen minutes after the chase began, I saw the female spread closely upon her nest ahead of us. Ah, there was the picture—no, the reality in every interesting feature—for where can you show an egg-crank a more pleasing sight than a live Curlew hovering her nest? That was the picture we didn't get, and I still believe I saw the real picture, and what we carried back on our plates was a mere suggestion of what the bird-lover saw and carried home. Look at the picture and judge for yourself. As I write this I see in memory that mother Curlew flattened over her eggs, and I long for the days to come again when the Curlews will lead me a merry chase.

Several days later that same old egg-box and camera were concerned in another affair worth mentioning. My fellow-hobbyist was absent, having gone out of town to take some *pictures*; but the original man with a hobby was there. I was wandering along a dry water course, having frequent patches of weeds and sprouts, suggestive of nests of Marsh Hawk or Sharp-tailed Grouse. In fact, I had seen several times a Hawk quartering along over the locality, and I started in to search the rose-patches for a nest. You understand how a fellow, when he once gets

started and doesn't find anything, will keep going. After awhile I found myself far beyond the locality I had spotted for the Hawk's nest, but as it seemed I ought to stumble on a nest of Grouse, or something, I kept going. Nests of the Lark Bunting were there in plenty, but as I had room in my collecting box for only a good set of Hawk or Grouse I didn't bother the Buntings. Once I startled a female Bunting from a nest with seven eggs, and when I saw five males at once settle in the bush in which she took refuge, I was prone to question the code of ethics governing a Bunting household. Then I thought how queer it was that nature is so capricious; if Lark Bunting eggs were quite rare and worth two dollars each in exchange, more than likely the Bunting's nests would be located in the tops of the highest pine trees on the hillsides, and I could never find one in a day's travel. It seems strange that Mr. Emerson omitted this little point from his essay on "Compensation."

As I was saying, presently a little patch of weeds caught my eye, over on the bench. It was just a little patch, no more than eight or ten feet in diameter.



NEST OF THE SHORT-EARED OWL

Disappointed and leg weary, I brusht threateningly against it to alarm any possible tenant; and what happened? A great cloud of grayish brown feathers floated almost into my face from between my feet, and drifted noiselessly away over the bench. My first impression was that the entire patch of shrubbery had taken wing in my startled imagination. Then all the catalog of owls rusht thru my mental vision, and I realized that for the first time in my life—the first time, mind you—I had chanced on the nest of the Short-eared Owl. Yes, I, too, was once a barefoot boy, but I did not experience all the pleasures of life in that limited boyhood; there was something left that had just fallen to my lot—a new experience in bird nesting. No doubt some of you who are getting as gray-headed as I am can imagine something of my exultation as I peered at the opening in the shrubbery at my feet. Eight eggs, large and pearly and shiny—no, that was all in my imagination, for as I examined them I found them dirty and blood stained, yet I knew that a little water would remedy all that. Did I leave them in that damp opening,

hoping that eight little owls would later emerge from that dark cavity and thus augment the bird population of that section? Nay, verily, for I have the eight, now pearly and shiny and clean, where they can do much more good than as well developed and mature owls. To the man with a hobby, a set of eggs in the cabinet is worth more than a flock of birds in the bush.

And now you have two very easy solutions of the proposed problem—a problem in indeterminates, and hence capable of many answers.

Lewistown, Montana.

THE USE OF MAGPIES' NESTS BY OTHER BIRDS

By ROBERT B. ROCKWELL

WITH ONE PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

MUCH has been said (and much has been left unsaid) regarding the manifold depredations of the Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica hudsonia*), and these incriminating utterances are built on a firm foundation of truth. It is consequently with a sense of relief that we are able to turn our attention to a topic in which this interesting bird does not play the role of heavy villain, and particularly in view of the fact that in this instance he appears as the benefactor of the other birds, a condition of affairs diametrically opposed to his normal attitude.

It is in the construction of a fairly permanent place of refuge for many species of birds that the magpie does much toward counter-balancing his many bad habits, and predatory tendencies. The great heavy nests, so beautifully cupped and lined inside, so wonderfully domed over and walled up outside, and withal so remarkably constructed as to withstand the ravages of the elements for years, constitute a veritable bird palace for a number of species whose natural ability as architects is a negligible quantity.

As a haven of safety during sudden storms or unlookt-for spells of severe weather, there are indeed few species of perching birds that do not find in the abundant abandoned magpie's nests an important addition to the many protected safety stations a wise Nature provides for her feathered children. During severe rain or hail-storms robins, blackbirds, bluebirds, warblers, and in fact all those species that frequent the timbered creek-bottoms in the territory where the magpie is common, make frequent use of these great nests.

A few species utilize the abandoned nests continuously, but these birds are necessarily few in number, as they are birds that restrict themselves to a given locality. To this class belong the Western Horned Owl, the Long-eared Owl and the Rocky Mountain Screech Owl, the two former of which spend nearly their entire time during the day in these welcome retreats, while the latter species makes frequent use of them when not occupying a cavity in a tree. It is a rather amusing spectacle to see a round, fluffy little screech owl (dislodged from his cosy corner in a hollow tree) making desperate efforts to reach the nearest magpie nest before the noisy throng of mischief-loving magpies overtakes him, and even more comical to see the plain look of disappointment and incredulity upon the "countenances" of the pursuers, as the owl reaches the welcome refuge and instantly merges himself into his surroundings; for strange as it may seem magpies will not

follow an owl into an abandoned nest, and seem utterly at a loss to understand the prompt disappearance of the object of their pursuit.

It is, however, in furnishing an ideal nesting site for several species of birds that the magpie bestows his greatest gift upon his bird neighbors.

As has been mentioned before the two species whose occupancy of magpie's nests is most prevalent are the Long-eared Owl and the Western Horned Owl. Both of these birds are notoriously averse to anything that bears a semblance to work, and the substantial last year's nests of the magpie furnish an ideal receptacle for the great white eggs and the fluffy youngsters.

Very little repairing is done to the abandoned structure preparatory to laying the eggs. A few feathers from the parent's breast, and possibly those of some bird which has fallen a prey to the owl, together with the accumulation of dead leaves, dirt and refuse found in old nests, form the "lining" upon which the eggs are laid. Capt. Bendire in his "Life Histories" states that the Western Horned Owl deposits its eggs "occasionally inside but more often on the broken-down roof of these bulky structures." This statement will probably apply equally well to the Long-eared Owl as I have yet to find the first set of these eggs laid in a magpie's nest which was domed over, altho the owls frequently make use of the interior of rooft nests as hiding places.

Owing to the nature of the timber thruout a large portion of western America the great majority of magpie's nests range in height from 15 to 25 feet above ground, altho occasional nests are encountered ranging upward to at least 60 feet above ground. However, the high nests do not seem to be preferred by the above mentioned species, or in fact by any of the following mentioned species and it is safe to say that practically all birds occupying magpie nests utilize nests varying from 15 to 30 feet above the ground.

The Rocky Mountain Screech Owl, like all of the genus *Otus*, nests almost entirely in natural cavities or deserted woodpecker's nests and I have never been fortunate enough to discover a nest in any other situation; but Bendire in his



A MAGPIE'S NEST APPROPRIATED BY A PAIR OF
SPARROW HAWKS NEAR DENVER, COLORADO

"Life Histories" states that this subspecies *does* appropriate deserted nests of the magpie for a nesting site and quotes such excellent authorities as W. G. Smith, Dennis Gale and A. W. Anthony in support of the statement, and while he does not describe the nest in detail it is perfectly reasonable to assume that the details of the nesting site would differ very little if any from that of the two preceding closely allied species.

Very similar to the Screech Owl in its habits of nidification is the Sparrow Hawk, and this noisy little tyrant of the woodland, while ordinarily choosing a hollow tree for his nesting site, not infrequently takes possession of some deserted magpie's nest, where after a few very crude repairs are made, the rusty colored eggs are deposited. The Sparrow Hawk, unlike the preceding species, seems to prefer nests which are roofed over, and instances where the eggs are deposited in open nests are quite rare. It is of some interest to note that Sparrow Hawks nesting in this manner are much more timid than those nesting in cavities, and whereas it is a common occurrence to find a brooding female so fearless that it is necessary to remove her from her eggs in a cavity, it is seldom that one can approach within thirty yards of a bird brooding in a magpie's nest without flushing it. Apparently the bird does not feel perfectly secure in a location which is not altogether natural to the inherited instincts of the species.

Another bird, similar to the preceding tho not nearly so common, is the Sharp-shinned Hawk, and this bird occasionally lays its eggs in deserted nests of the magpie. Davie in his "Nests and Eggs of North American Birds" mentions a nest found by Chas. F. Morrison at Fort Lewis, Colorado, in a "dilapidated magpie's nest, the arched roof of which had fallen in and formed a hollow, which was lined with a few feathers upon some dead leaves."

Thus far all of the birds mentioned in this connection are raptorial birds, which with the exception of the Sharp-shinned Hawk are practically devoid of the nest-building instinct; but these great nests we are considering furnish a home not only for this class of birds but also for some species in which the nest-building instinct is fully developed. Bendire mentions a nest of the Mourning Dove built on the broken-down top of a magpie's nest at Fort Harney, Oregon, and during the spring of 1908 Mr. George Richards of Littleton, Colorado, found a beautifully constructed nest of the Bronzed Grackle, cosily esconced in the nest cavity of a practically new and well constructed magpie's nest.

During the spring of 1907 a magpie's nest at Barr, Colorado, was regularly observed from the time the first rude platform of sticks was put in place early in March until a noisy and very hungry brood of eight young ones was launched forth into the world in early May. Within a week of the time that the young magpies left the nest, an industrious pair of English Sparrows began the construction of one of their bulky nests in the interior of the magpie's nest, and when, some two weeks later, it was decided, for obvious reasons, that the sparrow family must move we were greatly surprised to find a partially incubated egg of the Cowbird, in the nest of the English Sparrow.

Besides the species here named that are known positively to make use of deserted nests of the magpie, there are several species whose characteristic nesting habits make it entirely probable that they also occasionally make use of such nesting sites. For example the Swainson Hawk is known to make frequent use of deserted nests of the crow, and the Turkey Vulture has been known to utilize old nests of hawks and herons but the species enumerated furnish abundant proof that in one way at least the magpie partially atones for the many sins that Nature has made him heir to.

Denver, Colorado.

SWARMING OF THE RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET

By J. W. PRESTON

WHEN the endless come and go and care and worry of the city has tired one to the point of distraction, every fiber yearns for a change. How welcome the day when care may be cast aside! Such a time came to me last June. Early, while the mists floated leisurely up from a hill-hemmed lake, and mountain shadows fell heavy and long over the lower forests, and the sun touched with glory some distant gleaming peaks, I wended my way across the foothills, up onto the shoulders of the mountains, past towering rocks from whose caves and crannies came the flute-sweet notes of the Rock Wren; while distant, circled a screaming hawk, startled from its nest on a dead fir tree. At the crest of a ridge a brood of Nutcrackers croak their garrulous scoldings.

There, as the cool mountain winds moved among the dwarf pines, was a clear view of the city and the river winding far into the great dim mountains. Here a trail led to a deep tangle of thicket and steep, rocky hills where the wild deer live during the summer months. How the crisp mountain air buoys you up with unwonted vigor and energy! What a change from the dust and din, way yonder on the paved and noisy streets!

At this elevation the Clarke Nutcracker nests, and here also a company of Western Evening Grosbeaks were nesting. From here I hastened down into the valley of a little brook which hurried along over stones and roots, in and out of mossy nooks, over which grow a dark mass of hemlock, fir and cedar, making a dense, shadowy dell, with pools and cress beds and mossy stones and logs, over which a Varied Thrush hurried to safety. The song of a Vireo lent charm, while wild flowers added their sweetness.

While quietly seated on a rock, enjoying the scene, I was suddenly *attacked* by a female Ruby-crowned Kinglet showing nest-worn conditions of plumage. She flew at my head in a most determined manner uttering an alarm-cry which for the size of the bird was strong. She most thoroly *scolded* me and by her persistent crying called up an interesting and interested company of birds: The Olive-backed Thrush, Louisiana Tanager, several species of Warblers, Western Chickadee, Red-breasted and Pigmy Nuthatches, a Brown Creeper, a pair of Rocky Mountain Jays and several Vireos—what a medley of bird voices! Some were scolding for dear life, some were happily singing their sweetest while others merely craned their necks and peered about to see where the trouble was. But the little Kinglet was the most interested of all. From her perch on a dead twig not ten feet from me she showed all the charms of her graceful birdship. If I moved the least, she was right up and after me.

Soon the male Kinglet came, with a moth in his bill. He seemed to think there was no cause for worry and hopped on up a white fir tree, from branch to branch, until, fifty feet from the ground, he stooped at a mossy ball of a nest suspended from the top of a bough six feet out from the tree. Then he was off again in search of food. By this time the mother Kinglet had subsided and was peering here and there among the bunches of needles and under inviting pieces of bark. Gaining a mouthful of moths and bugs, she too ascended the tree to the nest, and back and forth they went in quick succession, for their brood was numerous and hungry.

For an hour I sat watching the interesting family. It seemed to be swarming time at their house. Some of the little fellows had successfully gotten out and down some distance from the nest, while a busy lot were peering out over the rim and grasping onto the sides, but, fearful, they crawled back to the nest shelter, where from seven to eight were trying their first wings all at once, in fear and trembling; this was a charming little episode of bird life. Then as the mountain shadow came chill, all was quiet as the blue sides of the distant hills.

Spokane, Washington.

THE PASSING OF THE PEDRO ISLAND SEA-BIRD ROOKERY

By MILTON S. RAY

WITH TWO PHOTOS BY OLUF J. HEINEMANN

WHILE the number of sea-birds which formerly made their summer home on the rocky island which forms the extremity of Pedro Point in San Mateo County, can not be compared to the great Farallone Island rookeries, yet until recently various sea-birds nested here in quite large numbers, and many of the eggs of the California Murre displayed for sale in San Francisco markets were obtained from this source.

It was with a view of learning what birds and what number of birds were nesting on Pedro that we started to journey down the coast on the morning of July 12, 1908, in an open flat-car termed a passenger coach by the "Ocean Shore" man-



PEDRO ISLAND AS SEEN FROM THE MAINLAND

agement. Our party consisted of H. A. Snow, Oluf Heinemann, and the writer. On leaving the train we walked along the beach to where the point juts out from the mainland. Here we found a number of deep and rather broad sea-channels which separate Pedro Island from the mainland and precluded our reaching it. From the shore we observed a few sea-birds flying about the lofty and precipitous rocks.

Returning to town we engaged a crab-fisherman to take us out in his boat to the island. He informed us that in previous years he had easily collected as many as thirty dozen murre eggs on a trip, but of late the birds had become scarce owing to the continual blasting by the Ocean Shore Railroad Company in its construction work on the opposite mainland near the point. In fact he added that he had made a trip a few weeks before and had found but half a dozen eggs of the murre. After

hearing this we did not expect to find many birds on the island, but decided, however, to make the trip.

Near as the island is to the shore, it was necessary to row about a mile to reach it. The craft was rather small for four people and made slow progress against the waves of an open sea. Our boatman rowed to a spot which he claimed was the best on the island to land. As we neared the great mass of rock rising almost perpendicularly out of the sea it seemed to me that there was but little choice in the matter, for it meant a hard and dangerous climb wherever we disembarked. As I have stated, Mr. Heinemann was one of the party, so it will be understood that we had the usual collection of cameras, tripods and packing cases; these with a rope-ladder, provisions and other necessities made a considerable load. Landing, one at a time, on a wave-splashed rock, between one breaker and another, was exciting if not enjoyable. Then by way of variety came the climb of a narrow and steep



A PORTION OF PEDRO ISLAND; A FLOCK OF SEA-PIGEONS MAY BE
DISCERNED ON THE ROCKS AT THE RIGHT MIDDLE

rocky passage to the top of the ridge. It took the combined effort of Oluf and myself to aid the heavy-weight member of our party, Snow, to the top. From here a descent was made to the southern side where traveling was easier. However, the worst was yet to come, for, after a short distance, a steep bluff walled our way which we were forced to ascend, as the cliffs water-wise were as straight as a brick wall.

At the foot of the bluff we lost a member of our party, for Snow found the climbing too difficult and so was left in charge of the commissary department while Oluf and I worked our way to the top. After reaching the summit and wending our way along the ridge we came to a long level ledge which was no doubt in the past the main rookery. Many deserted cormorant nests still remained and in the rocky furrows were scattered egg-shells of the murre. There were but few birds about, however, and these were not nesting. Oluf remained behind to photograph

a flock of sea-pigeons, while I continued along the rocky back-bone to the extreme western point, but without finding any occupied nests and encountering but few birds. The day of the Pedro Rookery was past! The birds had dwindled in numbers so they could be actually counted, and what a meager list the colony gave!

1. *Phalacrocorax pelagicus resplendens* (Baird Cormorant) 24
2. *Phalacrocorax penicillatus* (Brandt Cormorant) 24
3. *Uria troile californica* (California Murre) 20
4. *Pelecanus californicus* (California Brown Pelican) 14
5. *Cephus columba* (Pigeon Guillemot) 15
6. *Larus occidentalis* (Western Gull) 10
7. *Lunda cirrhata* (Tufted Puffin) 6
8. *Larus heermanni* (Heermann Gull) 6

While we were dwelling on this serious decrease in Pedro bird statistics, Snow at the foot of the bluff was, from all appearances, making serious inroads on the supply of eatables, and from a distance we could hear, between the roar of the battering waves, the cry of our angry boatman whose idea of two hours and ours materially differed. The reader will acknowledge, with this situation before us, it would have been unwise to extend our investigations further.

After "sliding" down the bluff and taking a hurried lunch, we joined our impatient boatman who told direful tales of what might have happened had we delayed our coming any longer. With the stiff breeze that had come up, he declared, it would have been impossible for him to take us off and we would have been left on the isle with our scanty supply of provisions. But even the boatman did not know how grave a matter this would have been; for he could scarce dream what lusty appetites were possessed by our commissariat and official photographer.

Ornithologically and oologically considered our trip was a failure, and photographically partly so. Newcomers to the isle will no doubt find fewer birds than were noted by our party, for now, with the coming of the railroad and the attendant population along its line, the number of feathered dwellers on these sea-rocks will be less than ever.

San Francisco, California.

AN ORNITHOLOGICAL TRIP TO LOS CORONADOS ISLANDS, MEXICO

By HOWARD W. WRIGHT

WITH THREE PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

ON June 20, 1908, with three friends, Mr. J. R. MacIntock, Mr. Frank H. Long and Henry Wetherby, I left San Pedro for Los Coronados Islands, Mexico. It was the longest trip I had ever taken in my sail boat, the "Sea Bird", which is about thirty feet over all.

The trip down was uneventful save for a sixteen-hour calm, during which the swells were rolling mountain high, and which caused a falling off of appetite on the part of my friends, to say nothing of myself. Finally a brisk, stern wind sprang up, and we started at a rapid pace for San Diego, making before dark about eighty miles.

All spirits rose with the rising of the wind and on Sunday night, the 21st, we

reacht San Diego. The bay being reacht only by a very narrow and winding channel we did not enter until the following morning.

There we left Mr. Long to return by rail, and that evening at 8 P. M. we arrived off the South Island of the Coronados group. We sounded and anchored in twenty-eight feet of water. Bright and early the next morning we were up and made for the bay which lay about a half mile from us. We noticed along the cliff facing us quite an area of guano, and many pelicans, cormorants and gulls flying about, indicating a colony.

Arriving in the harbor we were at once struck by the beauty of the little bay, at the back of which rose a sheer cliff 300 feet high. On the right was a small cliff, above which was a steep cactus-covered slope to the summit. On the left was a low cliff, above which was another steep slope. The bay was as clear as crystal and very deep. Having anchored about the middle of this cozy little bay we took the punt and landed on a ledge underneath the cliff, there being no beach on which to land. This was no easy task; we had to watch our chance and go in on top of a wave, jump out, and lift the boat bodily from this ledge to one above. It was still more difficult to launch the skiff, our clothes being drenched both coming in and going out.

These islands are located about fifteen miles south of San Diego. There are three main islands: North, Middle and South. Their names indicate their position. They are very high and rugged, the highest being 672 feet and about a mile long. The only good harbor, and that only suitable for small craft, is the little bay on the northeast side of South Island in which we anchored. There is no water on these islands. Consequently there is little vegetation—cactus and ice plant being the most abundant, tho there was some kind of a scraggly bush scattered thruout.

The first day was spent in making camp and looking around a bit on South Island. The next day we went to North Island, which is about two miles to the northwest. But when one rows to it, it is about forty. We could not sail on account of the kelp. We stopt at Middle Island to examine a small gull colony,—eight nests with eggs. There were a few cormorants roosting on rocks, and a pair of oyster-catchers circled around us. One of the latter, which we shot, led us a merry chase thru the surf. We then continued our row to North Island on which we found large colonies of auklets with young, and colonies of gulls with young. The young gulls ran all over the island like chickens. There was a large colony of pelicans with almost full-grown young. The number of these we could



PORTION OF COLONY OF FARALLONE CORMORANTS ON
SOUTH ISLAND

not estimate, the island being too rocky. Scattered thru this colony of pelicans were a good number of Farallone Cormorants' nests with fresh eggs. We spent the day on North Island and returned at dark. We spent the rest of our time on South Island and Middle Island collecting, shooting, and taking notes. We did not consider North Island worth visiting again.

Following is a list of birds seen on this trip, with a few notes:

Ptychoramphus aleuticus. Cassin Auklet. A few were seen on the way down, and several colonies were found on North Island containing nearly full grown young. On the return trip I shot into a flock of fulmars, and to my surprise one of the birds which I shot for a fulmar, proved to be an auklet. They were mast into a compact flock with the auklet in its center.

Brachyramphus hypoleucus. Xantus Murrelet. Only two seen—a female with a downy young, about two miles from shore.



PORTION OF COLONY OF CALIFORNIA BROWN PELICANS
ON SOUTH ISLAND.

Several old nests were found with broken eggs, and two of them contained dead birds, killed probably by the cat which inhabits South Island.

Larus occidentalis. Western Gull. Very common; they are very destructive to the colonies of the other birds, eating eggs and small young. They were a great nuisance around camp, as they were so bold that we had to box everything that was not canned, or they would make short work of it. In a recent Geographical Magazine I read an interesting article about a colony of Brown Pelicans in Florida, in which the writer says that he noticed that the young pelicans in each nest were of different sizes and ages. He could not find any reason for this. I think I can explain

it. Down at the Coronados I found the same thing. The young pelicans and cormorants were of different sizes and ages in one nest. The reason was that when the pelican or cormorant laid an egg it had to sit on it to guard it from the gulls which were always on the look-out for a nest left unguarded. In this way the egg was incubated, so consequently the young birds were hatcht on different dates.

Sterna forsteri. Forster Tern. Several seen on the trip down.

Diomedea nigripes. Black-footed Albatross. A bird which I took to be of this species followed us for some time going down.

Fulmarus glacialis glupischa. Pacific Fulmar. Many seen on the trip; they were very shy.

Oceanodroma. Petrel, sp. ? We observed many petrels, but as we took none we

could not positively identify them. There were none breeding on the islands at that time.

Phalacrocorax auritus albociliatus. Farallone Cormorant. Very abundant on all three islands, tho breeding only on North and South Islands. The Farallone Cormorant colony on South Island was rather scattered in the pelican colony, and contained from fresh eggs to full grown young. They were very noisy, emitting a peculiar croak which sounded like the grunting of a pig. As they made this sound their cheeks swelled up very large, growing smaller as they prolonged the cry. The young were very much inclined to fight and we could not handle them without receiving on our hands scratches and bites.

Phalacrocorax penicillatus. Brandt Cormorant. Common on all three islands, tho the only colony we found was on the southwestern extremity of South Island, containing twenty-two nests, three of which contained eggs; the others contained very small young. The cormorants were very tame and would not flush until we were right among them, but were rather shy about returning.

Pelecanus californicus. California Brown Pelican. During our stay we called on what we had supposed, the first morning at South Island, to be a colony of pelicans; it proved to be better than we expected, being a large colony of pelicans and cormorants combined. It was impossible to estimate the number of nests on the island, as they were very scattered and the island was steep and rugged. Several nests were found in which the eggs were so incubated that the young cried out from within their shells as they were handled, and a portion



TYPICAL NEST AND YOUNG OF CALIFORNIA
BROWN PELICAN

of the little bill protruded from the shell. The young are white when first hatcht, but change to grey as soon as their feathers grow. However, until nearly full grown, much of their nest down remains. We noted that their colors were somewhat nest stained. They were very noisy and attempted to bite us as we passed, shooting their long bills out at us in a very comical fashion, their bills clicking like castanets. After the young are about half grown they gather in flocks and keep close together, probably for protection from their enemies. A queer action was that whenever they were hungry or frightened they disgorged their latest meals, which the gulls were not slow in putting away. For this reason the odor of this colony was frightful.

We found interesting novelties every minute. The most unusual was a young pelican whose wings were lockt behind its back so it could not possibly fly and had great difficulty in getting around at all. I undid the lock and was rewarded with a sharp blow from the bird's bill which it shot out very swiftly—almost sug-

gestive of some human gratitude. The old birds were shy and we had quite a little difficulty in getting photos of them. We arranged it, however, by setting the camera on a nest with a rock to keep it down and pulling the shutter with a long thread. The picture in this article, in which there are several old pelicans, was taken in this way. We spent several days with this interesting colony of cormorants and pelicans, collecting and taking notes and photos, all of which was done with difficulty, as the hillside on which the colony was situated was very steep and slippery from the ice-plant.

Ardea herodias. Great Blue Heron. Several seen but none taken.

Heteractitis incanusa. Wandering Tattler. Several seen on South and Middle Islands.

Arenaria melanocephala. Black Turnstone. Several seen on South Island; none taken.

Haematopus bachmani. Black Oyster-catcher. Four seen on Middle Island; only one taken.

Lophortyx californicus vallicola. Valley Quail. I went out on the first day and took two before I discovered that there were only about forty on South Island. These specimens are very faded and worn. These birds ought not be disturbed at all.

Falco peregrinus anatum. Duck Hawk. There were three pairs on South and Middle Island, but none taken.

Aeronantes melanoleucus. White-throated Swift. Quite a number on South Island.

Selasphorus alleni. Allen Hummingbird. A hummer which I took to be of this species, I found on South Island quite common.

Corvus corax sinuatus. American Raven. Several seen on South Island.

Melospiza coronatorum. Coronado Song Sparrow. For some reason these birds are very rare and exceedingly shy. I took none, as they kept out of range. We saw a few and heard some singing.

Carpodacus mexicanus clementis. San Clemente House Finch. Very common on all three islands. Their plumage is very light, the head of the males being pale yellow instead of red.

Helminthophila celata sordida. Dusky Warbler. Several old and young seen on South Island. I found one on the ground which was too young to fly; the parent birds were flying around evidently taking care of it.

Salpinctes obsoletus. Rock Wren. Very abundant on South Island, on the hill sides. One old nest found with an addled egg. It was near camp in a natural cavity in the cliff. The wren, for some reason, was going in and out of the cavity when we discovered the nest.

Pasadena, California.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Nest of the Western Meadowlark.—The nest of the Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) shown on the next page was discovered, one morning in May as I was riding the range on the Rancho San Geronimo, by my horse nearly stepping on it, frightening the poor owner so that she "looked not upon the order of her going" but fluttered away in great haste. It happened that her temporary domicile was so placed that a slight parting of the grass in front of it would allow the rays of the early morning sun to shine directly upon the eggs. This seemed

such a good opportunity to show the structure of the nest and the customary half-hood over it that the next day found me at the right hour on the spot with a camera, with the accompanying more or less unsatisfactory result. This nest was built in a cow track, faced toward the east, and was on a hillside in such a way that the opening was up hill. In consequence of this the camera had to be more inclined even than if the ground were level, thus distorting the relative positions. But the structure and hood show fairly well. The photo was taken May 25, 1908, and the eggs were about fresh.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Francisco, California.*



NEST OF WESTERN MEADOWLARK, SAN GERONIMO,

MARIN COUNTY

Photo by J. Mailliard

Condors in a Flock.—On October 1, 1908, about noon, I saw 18 Condors (*Gymnogyps californianus*) at one time at a point about 3 miles southwest of McKittrick, Kern County. In all of my work along the southeastern side of the Diablo and Temblor ranges during the last two years I have seen but two or three Condors, and this flock of 18 certainly were a surprise to me. As soon as I saw them I laid down on top of a hill and while eating my lunch had an excellent opportunity of observing them. I had my no. 8 binoculars and was able to bring some of them in very close as they circled over me. It was a great sight and one that I will never forget, as the greatest number I ever saw at any one time before was a flock of four which I saw in 1896, I think it was, on my way to Bear Valley, above San Bernardino.—RALPH ARNOLD, *Washington, D. C.*

Scolecophagus carolinus in Colorado.—While returning from a short trip up the South Fork of the Platt River, from Littleton, Colorado, February 20, 1909, I had the good fortune of meeting with a small flock of blackbirds, resembling the Brewer. There were about eight in the flock, males and females. I shot one and attempted to secure more, but they were very wild and escaped. They were in thick cottonwood growth near the river. The weather was mild with no snow on the ground.

Later, the bird taken (a male) was identified by Mr. Horace G. Smith, as a Rusty Blackbird, *Scolecophagus carolinus*, a rare bird for Colorado. The skin is now in my collection.

According to Prof. W. W. Cooke (*Birds of Colorado*, page 95) there are but two other records for Colorado: a pair collected near Denver, December 17, 1883, by H. G. Smith, and one taken by Prof. Wm. Osborn at Loveland, in November, 1889. Note that all these are winter records.—GEORGE RICHARDS, *Littleton, Colorado.*

The Swamp Sparrow on the Lower Rio Grande.—From rush grass growing along the banks of the Rio Grande, near Brownsville, Texas, I flushed three or four birds of this species (*Melospiza georgiana*) on December 23, 1908. One bird being secured proved to be an adult male.

Whether or not the species has been taken previously this far south, I cannot say positively; but the most extreme record I find (for Texas) prior to this note, is near San Antonio.—AUSTIN PAUL SMITH, *Brownsville, Texas.*

The American Redstart in Southern California.—On December 27, 1905, while collecting on the shore of Keweenaw Lake, near Pasadena, California, I found an American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) female, dead among the tules under a cottonwood tree. As far as I have been able to learn, this is an unusual record for the bird. Upon the suggestion of Grinnell the specimen was sent to Robert Ridgway and was identified as of this species.—PINGREE I. OSBURN, Pasadena, California.

Ancient Murrelet at San Clemente.—During December, 1908, I secured several Ancient Murrelets (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) about San Clemente Island. Oftentimes while "working" the coasts, I observed the remains of Ancient Murrelets and Cassin Auklets (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*) among the other victims of the storms. The southern (winter) range of *Synthliboramphus antiquus* includes the entire group of Santa Barbara Islands.—C. B. LINTON, Long Beach, California.

The small American Crossbill in California.—This museum has recently acquired a California-taken crossbill, which is apparently identical with the eastern form—*Loxia curvirostra minor*. It is a ♂ adult (full red plumage, in color exactly like the average of eastern examples); no. 7199, Univ. Calif. Mus. Vert. Zool.; Nicasio, Marin Co., Calif.; Feb. 21, 1909; collected by Louise Kellogg. Measurements: wing, 79.7; tail, 51.7; tarsus, 14.8; culmen, 13.3; bill from nostril, 11.9; depth of bill, 7.9.

This is the first example I ever saw of this form from the State, the usual race being *L. c. bendirei* (or if this be not recognized, *L. c. stricklandi*). A specimen of the latter secured in the same locality, but at another time, has kindly been sent to me by Joseph Mailliard. It is a ♂ adult (full red plumage, but of lighter, pinker hue than in eastern birds); no. 5652, Coll. J. & J. W. Mailliard; Nicasio, Marin Co., Calif.; March 5, 1895. Measurements: wing, 96.2; tail, 63.8; tarsus, 16.6; culmen, 17.8; bill from nostril, 15.8; depth of bill, 10.1.

The great discrepancy in size between the two forms, as shown by the above measurements, is not bridged over by variations in the material at hand. One other example from California referable to *minor* has just come to light (no. 5654, ♂, Coll. J. & J. W. M.). This is very like no. 7199, tho a trifle larger. It seems probable that the small form is merely an irregular winter visitant to the State, in the same role as east of the Rockies. Certainly the resident and breeding bird is always the larger race, judging from many summer birds from various parts of the transition and boreal zones in California.—J. GRINNELL, University of California, Berkeley, California.

Winter Notes from Clipper Gap, Placer County.—*Sturnella neglecta*. The Western Meadowlark has appeared in large numbers the past winter, feeding almost entirely in grain fields. I have heard complaints on all sides as to the damage done by this bird this winter.

Carpodacus purpureus californicus. The purple finch takes the place, to some extent, of the house finch here during the winter months, and this year is more common than usual. I have never found the purple finch breeding here, tho it is reported at Colfax in summer.

Carpodacus cassinii. Cassin Purple Finch. Not often noted here; but common during two weeks of cold weather in December, 1908.

Loxia curvirostra bendirei. I took my first crossbill at this elevation (1750 feet) December 16, during a severe snowstorm. A flock of six was noted.

Chondestes grammacus strigatus. Western Lark Sparrow. Feb. 15, I noted a flock of seven of these birds, the earliest spring record I have.

Ixoreus naevius meruloides. The Varied Thrush and Sierra Junco (*J. h. thurberi*) are unusually numerous this winter. The thrush is all over our hills, while commonly restricted to small numbers in the deeper canyons.

Merula migratoria propinqua. Western Robin. Only two or three seen up to January; later they have become more common, tho far below their usual numbers.—E. ADAMS, Clipper Gap, Placer County, California.

Behavior of a Young Rivoli Hummingbird.—During the early part of July, 1908, three young relatives of mine, while camped in Ramsey Canyon, of the Huachuca Mountains, Arizona, had an interesting experience with a young Rivoli Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*) and its mother.

After a heavy rain one afternoon, they noticed a large hummingbird flying about as tho much excited and on investigating found a half fledged and half drowned young one lying on the ground near the creek.

One of the girls picked it up and warmed it in her hands. It soon revived and was fed with honey on the end of a toothpick. The honey was pushed well down its throat and was evidently quite appreciated. To make it open its bill they would tickle it on the corner of

its mouth. It spent the night in some cotton and a handkerchief arranged as a nest in a candy box lid.

Early the next morning they were awakened by the buzzing of wings and found that the mother bird had found her young one and was investigating its condition and surroundings, coming into their sleeping quarters to do so.

On this day she fed it at intervals, perching on the edge of the box lid while doing so. On the next day they were holding it in their hands and feeding it honey when the mother arrived. She was quite puzzled as to what to do, but after some few seconds' hesitation alighted on the tip of the fingers of the hand which held the youngster, and fed it. Afterward she buzzed close to it and pushed it, apparently trying to coax it to fly and being quite vexed because it would not try.

The slightest movement was enough to startle the old bird, but she would return in a moment and alight on the hand which held the young one. The young people held it thus for a couple of hours during which time the scene described was repeated several times.

While the mother bird was away gathering food, the youngster would buzz its wings trying to fly but would not make the endeavor when its mother was present. All three of the people took turns holding it and the mother alighted on their hands without hesitation after her first experience.

They kept the bird for four days in the house. Its plumage, which had been very scant at first, rapidly spread. When found, there were only pinfeathers in the tail and on the neck, back and breast. At the end of four days the bare portions were pretty well covered and the bird could fly a few feet. They then put it out doors and for two days kept close track of it as it flew from one twig to another near by. The feathers seemed very nearly all developed by this time. It could fly well and was seen for several days in the vicinity with its mother. One of the astonishing features was the rapidity with which the feathers burst out.

A weak squeak was its only note, uttered at short intervals, except when its mother arrived when it chipped quite energetically.

Unfortunately, there was no camera present to record these interesting events, which at best can be poorly reported in words.—F. C. WILLARD, *Tombstone, Arizona.*

The Derby Flycatcher (*Pitangus derbianus*) a permanent Resident Within our Boundaries.—Written of as "rather a rare summer visitor in the lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas" in Bailey's Handbook of Birds of the Western United States, we must now alter this statement, and call it a permanent resident, in moderate numbers.

On January 5, 1909, while hunting some four miles up the river from Brownsville, and having entered a dense growth composed largely of the so-called Ebony (*Siderocarpus flexicaulis*) my attention was directed to a water hole, of some forty feet diameter, by the calls of Green Jays (*Xanthoura luxuosa glaucescens*). Upon approaching, a great clatter commenced, which I attributed to the Jays. Perceiving a motion in the brush at the edge of the hole, and without any clear view of a bird, I fired. The victim was a Derby Flycatcher, and it had been co-participant with the Jays in the great uproar. Later I discerned the more usual notes of another Derby, in the same brush, but owing to the density of the particular portion of the scrub in which this individual held forth, pursuit was impracticable. The water hole, about which these flycatchers and various other birds gathered, was garnished with many insects, both dead and alive, which suggest its avian attractions.

Two more of this species were secured on February 10, in the same locality, and likewise in dense scrub, where I was attracted to them by their harsh and persistent notes. However, the Derby Flycatcher keeps so well within growth of this character, both here and in Mexico, that many examples of it might occur in a single locality, and yet comparatively few be noted.—AUSTIN PAUL SMITH, *Brownsville, Texas.*

Flicker Feathers.—Among the curios of the Pacific Coast Indians in the museum in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, is an ornament in the shape of a thin flat belt, six or eight feet long—probably worn over the head—composed entirely, or nearly so, of the tail feathers (rectrices) of flickers (*Colaptes*). The feathers are so placed that the quills are toward the center, the butts overlapping each other, the ends of the feathers being evenly arranged toward the outside, all same side uppermost, and fastened together with fine twine. This ornament must represent a large number of birds and is unique under any circumstances. But one of the most interesting things about it is the fact that every once in a while—say from one to two feet apart—the rectrices of a cross-bred flicker (*cafer* + *auratus*) appear. It seems as if the tails of the birds must have been added as they were killed, for the more or less golden quills of the cross-bred birds appear in bunches of ten or twelve, making distinct breaks in the color scheme, while if the feathers had been indiscriminately mixed before being fastened in the belt these golden shafts would hardly be noticeable. This ornament is locked in a glass case, lying topside uppermost, as it were, and I had no opportunity to examine the underside where the gilding of the feathers would have been much more distinct.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Francisco, California.*

THE CONDOR

An Illustrated Magazine
of Western Ornithology

Publishd. Bi-Monthly by the Cooper Ornithological Club of California.

JOSEPH GRINNELL, Editor, - Berkeley, Cal.
J. EUGENE LAW, Business Manager, Hollywood, Cal.
W. LEE CHAMBERS, Assistant Business Manager,
Santa Monica, Cal.

WILLIAM L. FINLEY } Associate Editors
ROBERT B. ROCKWELL }

Hollywood, California: Publishd May. 20, 1909

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One Dollar and Fifty Cents per Year in the United States, Mexico, and U. S. Colonies, payable in advance.

Thirty Cents the single copy.

One Dollar and Seventy-five Cents per Year in all other countries in the International Postal Union.

Claims for missing or imperfect numbers should be made within thirty days of date of issue.

Subscriptions and Exchanges should be sent to the Business Manager.

Manuscripts for publication, and Books and Papers for review should be sent to the Editor.

Advertising Rates on application.

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The lay bird-student might be lead to believe from the trend of current comment that observations on the habits of birds, unaccompanied by photographs, are now-a-days scarcely considered worthy of publication. This is certainly far from true. We even suspect that articles of an inferior value from both a scientific and literary standpoint sometimes appear in print chiefly because striking photographs are furnished with them. We would not for a moment discourage anyone from the pursuit of bird photography. But we wish to emphasize here that the day is not likely to come when carefully written descriptive essays based upon conscientious and accurate observation will cease to be of much more scientific value than the usual run of illustrations. The manipulation of the camera may even absorb the attention of the operator, and result in his overlooking traits of behavior of the subject, which would be detected by the intent and undistracted observer. Descriptive articles without illustrations (as well as with) are solicited for publication in THE CONDOR.

Correspondents in *Bird-Lore* relative to the cat-question seem to be agreed on the point that cats in general are inimical to bird-life, tho there are instances in which felines have proved quite harmless. We are no more sure of anything than that house-cats (that is "pets"), as well as those "gone wild", cause an

immense mortality among birds, especially in the nesting season. The nature of "tabby" away from home, seems wholly altered. She is shy, alert and blood-thirsty. We will confess to having shot many a cat on our home place in Pasadena, caught in the act of destroying nestlings or immediately after killing a bird, which report subsequently affirmed to have been the cherished pet of a neighboring household. We are ungracious enough to admit of our joy in having ended the careers of these cats. "Cherished pets" of a murderous nature should be kept at home. The Audubon Societies could probably pursue a no more effective line of work than the propagation of sentiment against domestic cats, followed up by measures to secure their extermination along with Cooper and Sharp-shinned Hawks.

A party of Cooper Club members left San Pedro on March 26 on Jack London's boat, "The Snark," to cruise among the islands south along the Mexican Coast. Virgil W. Owen, Chester Lamb and Pingree I. Osburn compose the party, and their purpose is to collect reptiles (alive and in alcohol), insects, birds, mammals, and whatever else of interest to the naturalist they may find. The return of the expedition is expected during the latter part of May. It is said that most of the material they get will go to an Eastern museum.

The last of December, 1908, the young bird of the year belonging to the pair of Condors which have their home in the mountains near Pasadena, was shot by a former constable, Samuel L. Wallis. An attempt was made to sell the bird, resulting in this information getting out of its intended channel. Thru the efforts of Cooper Club members and the commendable activity of Game Warden Morgan of Los Angeles, evidence was secured, Wallis was brought to trial, and a conviction was obtained. But the Justice, in passing sentence, neglected to give an alternative of a jail term if the fine (\$50) were not paid; and so, because of the technicality, Wallis smiled and paid not. Now, however, he has been made deputy county assessor; and the Game Warden has discovered another technicality which balances the first: Wallis's pay is garnisheed and out of his first month's salary comes the \$50! The notoriety of this case has become so wide, that it is believed that anyone else posset of the notion that protected birds may be illegally killed with impunity will hesitate long. The bird killed by Wallis was confiscated and forwarded to the State Museum. No permits are issued by the State Game Commission for the taking of Condors by anyone for any purpose whatsoever. The pair of adult birds, to which last year's young one belonged, were, as far as can be ascertained, uninjured, and it is to be hoped that this year's youngster will reach maturity safely. The aerie has been kept a secret by certain Cooper Club members for several years, and every effort made to secure its protection. It was here that Finley and Bohlman made their photographic studies.

J. R. Pemberton and H. W. Carriger are spending the last two weeks of May looking into the ornithology of the mountains back of Kings City.

"Bird News" is the title of a new bird journal edited by Dr. F. W. D'Evelyn from offices at 717 Market Street, San Francisco. Volume I, nos. 1 and 2, January-February and March-April, 1909, are at hand, and show many points of interest. As this is the first magazine to occupy its field (aviculture) in America, there seems no reason why it should not thrive apace. We wish it and its genial editor every success. Those of our readers interested in birds as pets should invest 75 cents in a year's subscription to "Bird News."

The Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California is represented in the field by the following parties: Harry S. Swarth and Allen E. Hasselborg left Juneau, Alaska, on April 8, in a power boat with convenient equipment, to work the series of islands along the southeastern Alaskan coast between Frederick Sound and Dixon Entrance. Six months will be consumed in this trip, which is known as the 1909 Alexander Expedition. Frank Stephens and assistant left San Diego March 1, and are working in the Colorado Desert. Later they will travel by team slowly north into the southern San Joaquin country, where they will work until the last of October. Miss Annie M. Alexander, with Miss Louise Kellogg, Walter P. Taylor and Charles H. Richardson, has begun a three month's investigation of the fauna of the Virgin Valley region of northern Nevada. This area is probably one of the least known parts of the West from a zoological standpoint, and collections of mammals, birds, and reptiles from there together with the accompanying field-notes are expected to furnish results of exceptional interest.

President William L. Finley, of the Oregon Audubon Society, is active in securing the enforcement of bird laws in his State. His latest coup is the seizure of a great quantity of aigrettes illegally in the possession of some nine millinery dealers of Portland. Arrests were also made, the outcome of which was at last accounts sure to be in favor of the bird-protectors. The particular point in view in the present instance is the stoppage of the destruction of the native Egrets of eastern Oregon, a most worthy cause.

The following courses will be offered in the Summer Session of the University of California, at Berkeley, June 21 to July 31, 1909:

1. The Birds, Mammals, and Reptiles of California.

A course designed to acquaint the student with our common terrestrial vertebrates, and thus of value to teachers of zoology and nature-study. How to identify birds, mammals, and reptiles; their habits and life-histories; beneficial and injurious species; the songs of birds; migration; geographical distribution and variation as exhibited in the fauna of California; preservation of specimens, and the care and use of a school museum. Lectures, laboratory work, and field trips. 2 units.

2. Systematic Ornithology.

An examination and application of the methods of classification, as illustrated by the research collection of 23,000 birds; the significance of geographic variation and isolation in the processes of evolution; feather-structure, molt and abrasion; methods of field work; preparation of study skins; recording of field observations; cataloging of a collection. Lectures, laboratory and field work. 1 unit, or more, according to the time the student can devote to the subject.

The lectures are to be given by J. Grinnell in the Research Room of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

As a result of the April meeting of the A. O. U. Committee on Nomenclature, which cleaned up a large number of pending cases, the manuscript for the new Check-List is now practically finished. We have it from an authoritative source that there will be no further delay, and that the printing will begin very shortly.

Steps are being taken towards the founding of a new scientific organization with headquarters in San Francisco and to be known as the California Zoological Society. Its chief purpose will be the establishment at a generally accessible locality in the San Francisco Bay region of a zoological park in which a representation of the animals of Western North America in particular may be maintained as nearly as possible under natural conditions. The following are some of the names identified with the movement: J. C. Merriam, D. S. Jordan, W. E. Ritter, W. K. Fisher, J. Grinnell, F. W. D'Evelyn, C. A. Vogelsang.

Judging from galley-proofs we have been privileged to examine, R. C. McGregor's Manual of Philippine Birds will be an extremely creditable work. It is to be issued in two parts, the first part being now nearly ready to distribute. The subject matter includes keys, synonymies, distributions and full descriptions of all known species of Philippine birds.

Dr. W. K. Fisher will again this year conduct his popular summer camp for boys near Lake Tahoe. The members go on pack-trips, fishing, deer hunting and mountain climbing.

the camp thus furnishing a healthful vacation recreation full of the intensest of a boy's pleasures.

CORRESPONDENCE

Editor THE CONDOR:—

Will you permit me to lay aside, for the time being, any connection with THE CONDOR it may be my privilege to claim, and to address you simply as a Cooper Club member and reader of this magazine.

Owing to the fact that something over a page of valuable space in the last number of THE CONDOR was devoted to criticism of my statements, and that at least a part of it was not based upon facts, I feel that in justice to myself it is necessary to answer these strictures, much as I dislike to burden yourself and CONDOR readers with a useless argument.

Judge Henderson begins by calling attention to "several erroneous citations" which, when boiled down, are found to number just three, in one of which Judge Henderson is entirely at fault, and in the remaining two his criticism is so far fetched as to be purely a matter of personal opinion. He follows this with an outline of "The Early Western Surveys," with which most of us became familiar about the time we were learning how to use an identification key.

Now I do not intend to enter into a discussion of the merits of Henderson's criticism, because it is not of sufficient importance. I wish, however, to quote my authority for my use of the phrases "a United States Geological Survey bulletin" and "United States Geological Survey reports", using a small "b" and "r" in "bulletin" and "report" respectively. In W. W. Cooke's "Birds of Colorado," State Agricultural College, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin No. 37, page 27, will be found my authority for the first phrase; and on page 31 will be found my authority for the second phrase. At the time I used these phrases I considered them accurate enough for the use to which I put them. Since that time I have not changed my mind, and under date of April 8, 1909, Prof. Cooke himself writes me that he is of the same opinion.

Had Judge Henderson taken the trouble to look up the date of the first publication of Ridway's "Maxwell's Colorado Museum" instead of guessing at it, he would have saved himself from making the very error that he accuses me of making. Notwithstanding his statement to the contrary, this list was first published in 1877 in "Field and Forest," and my authority for this statement will be found in Cooke's "Birds of Colorado" on page 45, which is corroborated by Prof. Cooke in his letter of April 8th mentioned above.

Only one objection can be made to Prof. Felger's statements and that is that the facts are not as he has stated them. The Rocky Mountain Pine Grosbeak record is not Prof. Felger's record any more than it is mine, and his statement that the bird was taken by him and subsequently shown to me is also incorrect. As a matter of fact, at the time the record in question was made Prof. Felger was my guest and he was with me at the time the bird was taken. Whether he or I happened to kill the bird does not affect the ownership of the record in the least. His statement that the bird was taken July 8th instead of July 3rd, as stated in my Mesa County List, carries very little weight in the absence of proof. My notes are plain on this particular point, and I shall require more than Felger's unsupported statement to the contrary to induce me to recognize his alleged correction. Even admitting that he is correct, for the sake of argument, the spirit which prompted the publication of such a correction is too apparent to call for any remarks.

Now, in conclusion, I wish to state that I at all times welcome criticism and corrections of my work, when it is offered in a friendly spirit and is sincere, and I am continually asking for criticism and advice from those Ornithological friends whom I consider competent to criticize, but when one or more persons resort to the columns of a standard magazine as a means of discrediting me before its readers, for the satisfaction of a personal grudge, I feel that it is my privilege and my duty to myself to answer such attacks.

Very truly yours,
ROBT. B. ROCKWELL.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

THE THIRD EDITION of BAILEY'S 'HANDBOOK OF BIRDS OF THE WESTERN UNITED STATES' appeared early in the year and attests to the popularity of the work. It remains our only good local text-book of birds, and we hope that further editions will be warranted in the not distant future.

The third edition of the "Handbook" presents no decided alterations as compared with the first and second. However, all errors discovered have been corrected, many of the photographs of bird-skins have been replaced with drawings, and the forms of *Asragalinus* have been revised in the text to accord with the late rulings of the A. O. U. Committee.—J. G.

BIRDS AND MAMMALS OF THE 1907 ALEXANDER EXPEDITION TO SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA. By JOSEPH GRINNELL, EDMUND HELLER, FRANK STEPHENS, and JOSEPH DIXON. Univ.

X Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston; \$3.50.

of Calif. Pub., Zool., V, pp. 171-264; Feb. 18, 1909.

As the first published result of the work of the new University of California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, under the patronage of Miss Annie M. Alexander, this paper is of special interest. The list of birds is by Joseph Grinnell, who has incorporated, with his own critical notes, the field observations of the collectors, Joseph Dixon, Chase Littlejohn and Frank Stephens. Edmund Heller treats of the mammals and Dixon and Stephens describe the localities visited. The usefulness of the report is further enhanced by a map and several half-tone illustrations from photographs by Miss Alexander. The localities covered include Admiralty, Baranof, and Chichagof islands, Glacier Bay, and several other mainland points, all in the heart of the faunal district known as Sitkan. This interesting region has been explored zoologically but little, although it is in the most accessible part of Alaska and from its position and climatic peculiarities exceedingly attractive.

Ninety-nine species and subspecies of birds are annotated, eighty-one represented in the collection of 532 specimens, and six characterized as new, as follows: *Lagopus alexandrae*, *Lagopus dixonii*, *Buteo borealis alascanensis*, *Picoides americanus fumipectus*, *Loxia curvirostra sitkanensis*, and *Planesticus migratorius cawrinus*. It is doubtful, in these latter days, if a similar expedition to any other part of extra-tropical America could have secured so many ornithological novelties so well characterized as these appear to be.

The field observations relate principally to abundance, food and nesting, and descriptions of the eggs of a number of species are given. The Kittlitz murrelet was found in great abundance in Glacier Bay. The golden-crowned sparrow, curiously, was not observed as a breeder, although it certainly is such at White Pass and at Yakutat in the same general region. The gadwall is recorded for the first time from Alaska, but unfortunately in common with records of several other species this is only "according to Littlejohn's notebook," as specimens were not secured. The cormorant of the region is referred to *Phalacrocorax pelagicus*, the supposed subspecies *robustus* being discredited. The duck hawk, likewise, is referred to *Falco p. anatum*, the specimens secured failing to exhibit the characters of *pealei*. A small series of savanna sparrows is consigned to *Passerculus s. savanna*, which therefore is regarded as having an interrupted range. The questionable subspecies *Dendroica c. hooveri* and *Hirundo e. palmeri* are recognized and the names *Melospiza l. gracilis* and *Sphyrapicus ruber* are used for the northwest coast forms of the Lincoln finch and the red-breasted sapsucker respectively. The treat-

ment of subspecific forms and nomenclatorial questions is rather noticeably at issue with decisions of the A. O. U. Committee on Nomenclature and Classification. This could not possibly be open to objection if sufficient evidence were presented to make it at all likely that the Committee would regard the cases as subject to reconsideration. The reviewer is inclined to the belief that several of these points in this paper are well taken but ventures to suggest that if authors would calmly accept defeat in preliminary skirmishes and bide their time until accumulation of evidence made it possible for them to return in a veritable onslaught, there might be at least uniformity during the interim and we would be spared dribbling protests.—WILFRED H. OSGOOD.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

JANUARY.—A called meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held in the parlors of the Hotel Merritt, Oakland, on the evening of January 20, with nine members present and Mr. Ernest Mailliard as a visitor.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read, and approved as read.

Applications for membership were presented as follows: John Rowley, Palo Alto, Cal., by J. Grinnell; H. H. Kimball, Fresno, Cal., by W. Lee Chambers; Jesse T. Craven, Detroit, Mich., by W. Lee Chambers; Walter B. Barrows, East Lansing, Mich., by W. Lee Chambers; R. A. Bennett, San Francisco, Cal., by W. Lee Chambers; L. J. Hersey, Denver, Colo., by W. Lee Chambers; J. Warren Jacobs, Waynesburg, Pa., by J. E. Law.

Mr. Grinnell stated that he had received a letter from Dr. Palmer in which it was announced that the Island of Laysan had been set aside by the Government as a Federal Reserve.

A statement from Mr. Hunter showing the receipts and disbursements during his term of office was read and the Secretary was instructed to write Mr. Hunter thanking him for a very liberal donation made by him to the Club.

The resignations of C. F. Palmer and H. O. Jenkins were read and on motion accepted.

The resignation of Miss J. Newsom was read, but as the Treasurer reported that there were some back dues unpaid the resignation was laid over and the Secretary instructed to write.

The report of the Executive Committee, and also a copy of the proposed new constitution, were read. The latter did not meet with the approval of the members present and was referred back to the Committee with instructions to confer with a like committee from the Southern Division.

The Executive Committee's report was discussed by those present and placed on the table. Adjourned.

H. W. CARRIGER, *Secretary*.

FEBRUARY.—The February meeting of the Club was held on the evening of the 20th at the home of J. R. Pemberton, 846 Bryant Street, Palo Alto. In the absence of the President the meeting was called to order at 8:15 P. M. by Dr. W. K. Fisher, Sr. Vice-President.

The following members were present: Dr. W. K. Fisher, J. Mailliard, Weymouth, Dixon, Richardson, Pemberton, W. P. Taylor and Carriger. Mr. Rich was present as a visitor.

The regular order of business was changed and the papers were presented first.

Mr. Pemberton read a paper on the nesting of the Rufous-crowned Sparrow and exhibited a set of three eggs and the parent bird.

Mr. W. P. Taylor presented a paper on a hybrid hummer and showed the bird recently taken; also the skins of the Allen and Anna from which it is supposed to spring. Both these papers will appear in print at some future date.

Mr. Pemberton gave a short talk on a trip he and Mr. Carriger took to Fyffe in May and showed several interesting photos taken on the trip.

The regular order of business was now taken up and the minutes of the last meeting were read and accepted.

Applications for membership were presented as follows: Dr. J. C. Hawver, Auburn, Cal., by Mr. E. Adams; Ned Dearborn, Chicago, Ill., by Mr. H. S. Swarth; R. Park Harris, Renton, Wash., by Mr. A. M. Ingersoll; Frank L. Burns, Berwyn, Pa., by W. Lee Chambers; Ed. R. Warren, Colo. Springs, by W. Lee Chambers; W. L. Slater, Colo. Springs, Colo., by W. Lee Chambers; H. H. Hann, Mt. Hood, Ore., by W. Lee Chambers; Benj. F. Howell, Jr., Troy Hills, N. Y., by W. Lee Chambers; J. H. Riley, Wash., D. C., by W. Lee Chambers; E. B. Richards, Grass Valley, Cal., by W. Lee Chambers; R. L. Jesse, Philo, Ill., by W. Lee Chambers; John T. Nichols, New York City, N. Y., by W. Lee Chambers; Thos. S. Roberts, Minneapolis, by W. Lee Chambers; A. A. Saunders, Bozeman, Mont., by W. Lee Chambers; J. Henderson, Boulder, Colo., by W. Lee Chambers; Mrs. H. B. Wheelock, Evanston, Ill., by W. Lee Chambers; C. O. Whitman, Chicago, Ill., by W. Lee Chambers; Louis S. Kohler, Bloomfield, N. J., by W. Lee Chambers; H. K. Pomeroy, Kalamazoo, Mich., by W. Lee Chambers; C. Bradley Isham, New York City, by W. Lee Chambers; Philo W. Smith, Eureka Springs, Ark., by W. Lee Chambers; A. Wetmore, Lawrence, Kas., by W. Lee Chambers; W. E. Saunders, London, Ont., by W. Lee Chambers; D. D. Stone,

Oswego, N. Y., by W. Lee Chambers; Al. G. Ulrich, St. Louis, by W. Lee Chambers.

On motion duly carried the Secretary was instructed to cast the ballot for the following: John Rowley, H. H. Kimball, J. T. Craven, W. B. Barrows, R. H. Bennett, L. J. Hersey, and Mr. E. Mailliard.

Motion was made and carried that the Club extend to Mr. Lee Chambers its heartiest thanks for work done in bringing in new members.

The resignation of Dr. F. W. D'Evelyn as President of the Club was read and on motion duly carried; the same was accepted with great reluctance.

The resignation of Mr. Silloway of Montana was presented and on motion was accepted.

The following amendment to the Constitution was presented and carried by the Northern Division:

Moved to amend Article XII, by addition of section 4. In case it is deemed inadvisable for the Club to maintain the Library all publications may be disposed of at the pleasure of the Club. Amendment carried by the Northern Division.

Motion was made and carried that the sundry books, pamphlets and magazines which are now in the possession of the Cooper Ornithological Club (both donated books and CONDOR exchanges), except Belding's manuscript Water Birds of the Pacific District, be sold to the highest bidder and the money turned over to the treasurer.

Motion was made and carried that the sale be conducted by the Secretary.

The following resolution was unanimously carried. Resolved: That the Cooper Ornithological Club extend to Dr. F. W. D'Evelyn its heartiest appreciation of his continued efforts in furthering the interests of the Club and especially for his able services as President of the Society.

The following written motion was presented and signed by all present: We the undersigned, take pleasure in proposing the name of Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of the U. S. Biological Survey of Washington, D. C., for honorary membership in the Cooper Ornithological Club.

There being a vacancy in the President's chair Dr. W. K. Fisher, having resigned from the Sr. Vice-President's chair, was nominated for President and unanimously elected.

Mr. W. P. Taylor was nominated and unanimously elected as Sr. Vice-President.

The business being over the Club on motion adjourned and retired to the banquet room where a sumptuous repast was served, and it was long after midnight before the members separated and all voted it as one of the best meetings held for a long time.

H. W. CARRIGER, *Secretary*.

The Guide to Nature

The best General Magazine of Nature Ever Publisht

A successful attempt to publish a "Professional" Magazine with the
Amateur Spirit.

Attempts of various parties in the past have shown that it is very easy to **Publish** in the amateur way, with the amateur spirit. But soon the body was "dead" and only the spirit left.

The Guide to Nature is for all students and lovers of nature. That includes all ornithologists, tho it isn't an ornithological magazine. There are really some things in nature beside birds that are worth while.

The Guide to Nature is too good, too-expensive for free distribution. No other nature magazine ever publisht contains so many beautiful illustrations.

Send 15c for single copy, or join with us whole-heartedly and send \$1.50 for a year

EDWARD F. BIGELOW,

Stamford, Connecticut

Managing Editor.

Books and Magazines

— Especially —

Bird Publications

Oologists and Taxidermists Instruments. \$1 45
Finley's American Birds - - - 2 90
Feathered Game of the Northeast—Rich
Forest and Stream and New Subscription to
Condor - - - 3 60
Four selected sizes Cut-Lining Egg Drills 1 00
PROMPT QUOTATIONS. LISTS FOR ASKING.

BENJAMIN HOAG

Stephentown

New York

W. LEE CHAMBERS,

Santa Monica, Cal.

Offers the following rare old Western Ornithological Magazines for sale at prices affixed:

Nidologist—Vol. II, complete, \$7.50; Vol. III, complete, \$2.00; Vol. IV, complete, \$1.50.
Osprey—Vol. II, complete, \$2.00; Vol. VI, complete, \$1.00.

Oregon Naturalist—Vol. II, complete, \$1.00; Vol. III, complete, \$1.00; Vol. IV, complete, \$1.00.

I have about 2000 odd numbers of all volumes of nearly every Western bird magazine published. What do you need to complete your files? What odd numbers have you to exchange?

AUKS WANTED:— I wish to obtain by purchase any of the following parts of **THE AUK** to complete my set. Vols. I to VI, 1884 to 1889, all parts wanted; 1901, No. 4; 1904, No. 4. Please quote me prices on any of the above.

R. C. MCGREGOR

Bureau of Science, Manila, P. I.

A LOVER



of the Out Door Life
Needs Outing Clothing
We Make it

Handsome, Comfortable garments of khaki and corduroy, made to measure for men and women. We also supply high grade footwear, laced boots, moccasins, still hunters and sportsmen's sundries.

ALWAYS IN STOCK

Taxidermists Guns
Standard Ammunition
Fishing Tackle
Compasses
Field Glasses

The Wm. H. Hoegge Co., Inc.

138-140-142 South Main St.

Los Angeles, Cal.

When replying to advertisements please mention THE CONDOR

≡≡≡ BIRD-LORE ≡≡≡

Is now publishing a series of
plates, by Louis Agassiz Fuertes and
Bruce Horsfall, illustrating

The Flycatchers of North America in Color

20 cents a copy

\$1.00 a year

THE MACMILLAN CO.

Fifth Avenue, - New York City

Hand Book of Birds OF THE Western United States

By FLORENCE MERRIAM BAILEY

With thirty-three full-page plates by Louis Agassiz
Fuertes, and over six hundred cuts in the text.

THIRD EDITION - Revised

\$3.50 Net. Postpaid, \$3.69

Houghton Mifflin Company

4 Park Street

Boston, Mass.

When replying to advertisements please mention THE CONDOR

